

<b>Date:</b>	<b>22 May 2002</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>2.00 -5.30pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Strategic priorities for spending round.</b>

The attached letter and attachments from the Finance Minister provide the background to the forthcoming budget round.

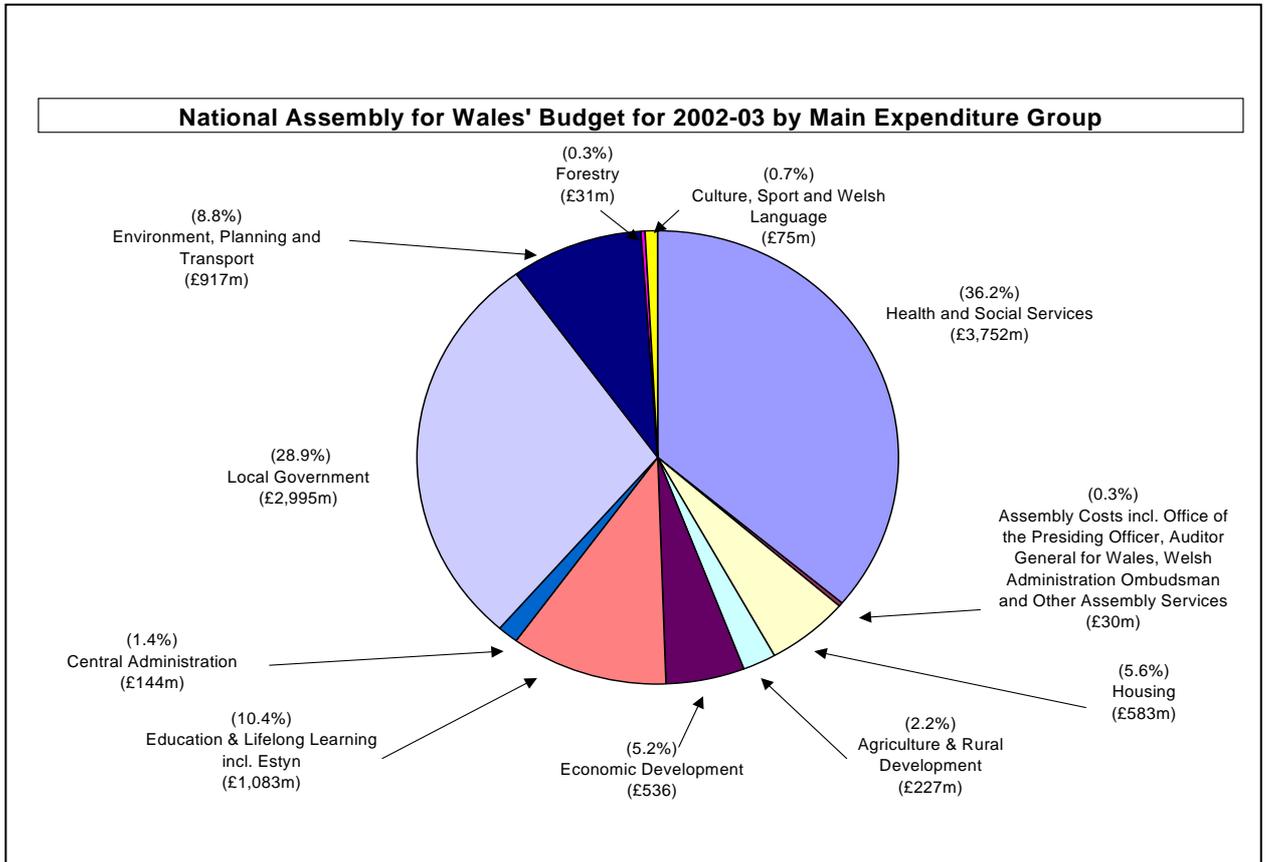
**Committee Secretariat**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES**  
**COMMISSIONING PAPER FOR THE 2002 BUDGET PLANNING ROUND**

**Introduction**

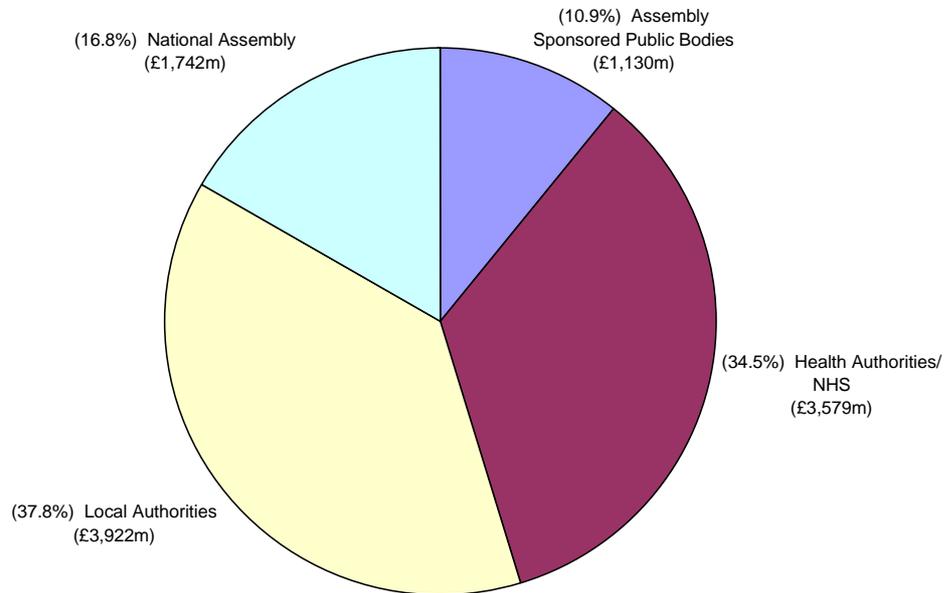
1. This paper describes the plans for the 2002 budget round and formally sets in motion the budget process under Standing Order 19.
  
2. **Assembly Committees and other partners are requested to respond to this, and any subsequent papers that Ministers may issue by 16 July at the latest.** This will assist the Finance Minister to draw up the draft budget in September.
  
3. The main aims for this round are:
  - to measure progress and focus on delivering against existing key targets, including those in *A Plan for Wales* and *Putting Wales First: A partnership for the people of Wales* ;
  
  - to continue to test the effectiveness of our existing performance within existing budgets;
  
  - to identify emerging pressures;
  
  - to look ahead, and provide positive ideas for meeting medium to long terms objectives to create a better Wales.

## The financial background



## The National Assembly for Wales' Budget 2002-2003

### WHO SPENDS IT



4. In terms of the main service areas, [almost 47 per cent] of the Welsh budget is spent on health, personal social services and education.

### Issues for consideration

5. Like last year, we would like all committees and partners to consider the following issues as they relate to their areas of interest –

#### *Sustainable Development*

- How well is current work contributing towards sustainable development and in particular the integration of its social, economic and environmental aspects?

#### *Social Deprivation*

- How far is current work addressing deprivation? For background see the new index of deprivation. Particular issues include:
  - how work might change to reflect the proposals for a Communities First programme which bring funding from different sources together;
  - whether there is sufficient consistent focus on the needs of children and young people; and
  - the extent to which support is made available for older people.

### *Equality*

- What progress has been made during the last financial year towards mainstreaming equal opportunities to meet the aims of the Assembly for equality of opportunity?
- What steps could be taken to improve performance?

### *Simplification*

- Significant progress has been made over the last 12 months in reducing bureaucracy. What scope is there for further reductions?

### *Delivery*

- Are the current delivery mechanisms the most suitable and effective to deliver the Assembly's goals? In particular:
  - could more use be made of the voluntary sector?
  - Is the role of the sponsored bodies the right one?
  - What barriers remain to effective joint working?

## **Handling the budget planning round**

6. The main elements are:

### *Position Papers from Ministers*

7. This commissioning note gives committees and partners early notice of the BPR process. Ministers will bring forward position papers later.

8. The papers will give a view on:

- performance during 2001-2002;
- report on progress, barriers and issues in achieving the key existing 2004 targets, eg in *A Plan for Wales*; and
- report on progress with *Putting Wales First*.

#### *Draft Budget*

9. In the light of the views received, the administration will bring forward a draft budget for consideration in October. This is required under Standing Order 19.2. This will allow Committees and other interested parties to make comments on the proposed allocations.

#### *Final Budget*

10. In accordance with Standing Order 19.3, the aim is to set a final detailed budget in late October. This will allow recipients of funding plenty of time to plan for their programmes.

11. Committees and formal partners should respond to the relevant Minister.

12. All other partners, individuals and organisations should respond to:

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